

**Appropriations Committee**  
**Public Hearing – February 21, 2017**  
***H.B. No. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM***  
***ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.***

**Joseph Andreana, Former Board Member**  
**Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley**

My name is Joseph Andreana. I am a resident of the Town of Oxford, CT and had served as a Board member and Board President for the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley (BGCLNV). Our Boys & Girls Club is a member of the Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs. I also served as the Executive Director for the Connecticut Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs beginning in 2004 until my retirement on 2012. During my tenure as both a local Board member and as the Executive Director of the Connecticut Alliance I have been able to witness the great work being done by all of our state's 17 Clubs that collectively serve over 50,000 of our state's youth, many of whom come from disadvantaged communities and dysfunctional families. These Connecticut Clubs, effectively and economically, provide programs that focus on academic success, healthy lifestyles and good character and strong citizenship. Although I am not able to attend today's public hearing, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to express my opposition to H.B. No. 7027 An Act Concerning The STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

I am compelled to oppose the proposed reduction and consolidation of Neighborhood Youth Center funding into a pool of funds (Student Support Services) designed to serve far too divergent population groups and needs.

Numerous studies, most notably a study conducted by the Institute for Social Research and the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan, speaks to the economic benefits derived from the Boys & Girls Clubs operations. It cites that for every \$1 invested in Boys & Girls Clubs, they return \$8.07 in economic benefits for both the individual and society as a whole. The \$21M spent by Connecticut Clubs, primarily within our state, provides a safe and enriching afterschool environment that leads to increased parental earning power, a 60% less likelihood of chronic school absenteeism and a higher high school graduation rate than those not served by our Connecticut Clubs. At the BGCLNV in 2016, 100% of our senior members graduated on time and 100% went on to higher education institutions. The success compares favorably to the 78% on time graduation rate within the Lower Naugatuck Valley.

The benefits of a Boys & Girls Club experience cannot be overstated. It is for that reason that I must oppose the passage of H.B. No. 7027. To reduce and/or consolidate the Neighborhood Youth Center funding, for the reasons stated above, would not in any way benefit the state's budget situation and would, in fact, result in additional dollars being spent by the State of Connecticut to deal with the social issues that will surface due to a reduction in the services and programs being provided by the Connecticut Boys & Girls Clubs.